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17	Attorneys for Plaintiff and the Putative (Class
18	UNITED STATES	S DISTRICT COURT
19	CENTRAL DISTR	ICT OF CALIFORNIA
20	Charles Robbins, individually and on	Case No.
21	behalf of all others similarly situated,	
22	Plaintiff,	CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT
23	1 1441111111111111111111111111111111111	
24	V.	
25	Gerber Products Company (d/b/a Nestle Nutrition, Nestle Infant Nutrition	JURY TRIAL DEMANDED
26	or Nestle Nutrition North America) and	
	Nurture, Inc. (d/b/a Happy Family Bran	ads
27	and Happy Family Organics),	
28	Defendants.	
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Plaintiff, Charles Robbins (hereinafter "Plaintiff"), individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, by his attorneys, alleges the following upon information and belief, except for those allegations pertaining to Plaintiff, which are based on personal knowledge:

NATURE OF THE ACTION

- 1. This action seeks to remedy the deceptive and misleading business practices of GERBER PRODUCTS COMPANY (d/b/a Nestlė Nutrition, Nestlė Infant Nutrition, or Nestlė Nutrition North America) (hereinafter "Gerber") and Nurture, Inc. (d/b/a Happy Family Brands and Happy Family Organics), (hereinafter "Nurture") (Gerber and Nurture collectively as "Defendants") with respect to the marketing and sales of Defendants Gerber and HappyBABY, HappyTOT, and HappyKID product lines throughout the State of California and throughout the country. The Gerber and HappyBABY, HappyTOT, and HappyKID product lines include the following products (hereinafter the "Products"):
 - Gerber Banana Sitter 2nd Foods;
 - Gerber Sweet Potato Sitter 2nd Foods;
 - Gerber Apple Strawberry Banana Sitter 2nd Foods;
 - Gerber Apple Sitter 2nd Foods;
 - Gerber Banana Blackberry Blueberry Sitter 2nd Foods;
 - Gerber Pear Sitter 2nd Foods;
 - Gerber Apple Banana with Oatmeal Sitter 2nd Foods;

1	 Gerber Banana Apple Pear Sitter 2nd Foods;
2	 Gerber Butternut Squash Sitter 2nd Foods;
3 4	 Gerber Banana Orange Medley Sitter 2nd Foods;
5	 Gerber Apple Blueberry Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
6	
7	• Gerber Green Bean Sitter 2 nd Foods;
8	Gerber Banana Pear Zucchini Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
9	• Gerber Carrot Sitter 2 nd Foods;
10 11	 Gerber Apple Blueberry Sitter 2nd Foods;
12	 Gerber Organic Banana Mango Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
13	
14	 Gerber Fruit & Yogurt Strawberry Banana Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
15	• Gerber Peach Sitter 2 nd Foods;
16	Gerber Banana Blueberry Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
17 18	 Gerber Sweet Potato Turkey with Whole Grains Dinner Sitter 2nd Foods
19	 Gerber Banana Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
20	 Gerber Organic Pear Peach Strawberry Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
21 22	 Gerber Pear Cinnamon with Oatmeal Sitter 2nd Foods;
23	
24	 Gerber Organic Apple Blueberry Spinach Sitter 2nd Foods;
25	• Gerber Pea Sitter 2 nd Foods;
26	Gerber Apple Mango Strawberry Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
27	 Gerber Pear Pineapple Sitter 2nd Foods;
28	• Gerber Carrot Sweet Potato Pea Sitter 2 nd Foods;

1	Gerber Fruit & Yogurt Very Berry Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
2	 Gerber Apple Pear Peach Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
3	
4	 Gerber Sweet Potato Corn Sitter 2nd Foods;
5	• Gerber Apple Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
6 7	 Gerber Banana Carrot Mango Sitter 2nd Foods;
8	Gerber Organic Pear Peach Strawberry, Carrot Apple Mango & Apple
9 10	Blueberry Spinach Baby Food Pouch Variety Pack Sitter 2 nd Foods;
11	• Gerber Mango Sitter 2 nd Foods;
12	Gerber Organic Purple Carrot Banana Acai with Cardamom Pouch Sitter
13	2 nd Foods;
14	
15	• Gerber Apricot Mixed Fruit Sitter 2 nd Foods;
16	 Gerber Chicken and Gravy Sitter 2nd Foods;
17 18	• Gerber Organic Squash Pear Peach with Basil Pouch Sitter 2 nd Foods;
19	 Gerber Organic Squash Apple Sweet Potato Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
20	 Gerber Sweet Potato Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
21	
22	• Gerber Turkey and Gravy Sitter 2 nd Foods;
23	 Gerber Beef with Gravy Sitter 2nd Foods;
24	 Gerber Fruit & Yogurt Peaches & Cream Toddler 12+ Months;
25	
26	• Gerber Prune Apple Sitter 2 nd Foods;
27	• Gerber Organic Apple Zucchini Spinach Strawberry Pouch Sitter 2 nd
28	Foods;

1	 Gerber Ham with Gravy Sitter 2nd Foods;
2	• Gerber Prune Supported Sitter 1 st Foods;
3 4	 Gerber Apple Banana with Mixed Cereal Sitter 2nd Foods;
5	 Gerber Banana Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
6	
7	• Gerber Banana Plum Grape Sitter 2 nd Foods;
8	Gerber Very Berry, Peaches & Cream & Strawberry Banana Fruit &
9 10	Yogurt Pouches Toddler 12+ Months;
11	 Gerber Carrot Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
12	 Gerber Organic Carrot Apple Mango Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
13	 Gerber Pear Zucchini Corn Sitter 2nd Foods;
14 15	 Gerber Apple Cherry Sitter 2nd Foods;
16	 Gerber Apple Sweet Potato with Cinnamon Toddler 12+ Months;
17 18	 Gerber Banana Blueberry Sitter 2nd Foods;
19	 Gerber Apple Strawberry Banana Sitter 2nd Foods;
20	Gerber Organic Banana Raspberry & Yogurt with Vanilla Pouch Toddler
21 22	12+ Months;
23	Gerber Pear Supported Sitter 1 st Foods;
24	 Gerber Apple Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
25	
26	• Gerber Apple Strawberry Banana Pouch Sitter 2 nd Foods;
27 28	 Gerber Carrot Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
20	 Gerber Apple Avocado Sitter 2nd Foods;

1	 Gerber Apple Zucchini Peach Sitter 2nd Foods;
2	Gerber Organic Pear Spinach, Pear Mango Avocado & Apple Zucchin
3 4	Spinach Strawberry Variety Pack Pouches Sitter 2 nd Foods;
5	 Gerber Apple Spinach & Kale Sitter 2nd Foods;
6	 Gerber Butternut Squash Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
7	
8	Gerber Organic Mango Apple Carrot Kale, Apple Peach & Banana
9	Mango Baby Food Variety Pack Pouches Sitter 2 nd Foods;
1	 Gerber Apple Carrot Squash Sitter 2nd Foods;
2	• Gerber Apple Prune Sitter 2 nd Foods;
3	Gerber Peach Supported Sitter 1 st Foods;
5	 Gerber Apple Peach Squash Sitter 2nd Foods;
6	Gerber Organic Mango Peach Carrot Sweet Potato Oatmeal Pouch
7	Toddler 12+ Months;
8	Toddiei 12 i Wolfins,
9	• Gerber Pear Carrot Pea Sitter 2 nd Food;
20 21	Gerber Banana Strawberry Beet Oatmeal Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
22	 Gerber Green Bean Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
23	Gerber Pear Supported Sitter 1 st Foods;
24	 Gerber Organic Banana Mango Avocado Quinoa Vanilla Pouch Toddler
25 26	12+ Months;
27	
28	• Gerber Sweet Potato Apple Pumpkin Sitter 2 nd Foods;
	 Gerber Sweet Potato Banana Orange Sitter 2nd Foods;

1	Gerber Organic Apple Mango Raspberry Avocado Oatmeal Pouch
2	Toddler 12+ Months;
3	
4	• Gerber Pear Guava Sitter 2 nd Foods;
5	 Gerber Sweet Potato Mango Kale Sitter 2nd Foods;
6 7	 Gerber Pear Mango Avocado Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
8	• Gerber Pumpkin Sitter 2 nd Foods;
9	 Gerber Squash Pear Pineapple Sitter 2nd Foods;
10	Carlon Anala Strovela anne Dherbank Sittan 2nd Eagada.
11	 Gerber Apple Strawberry Rhubarb Sitter 2nd Foods;
12	 Gerber Organic Pear Peach Oatmeal Toddler 12+ Months;
13 14	 Gerber Pear Zucchini Sitter 2nd Foods;
15	Gerber Organic Banana Acai Berry Mixed Grain Pouch Toddler 12-
16	Months;
17 18	 Gerber Pea Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
19	 Gerber Puree Favorites Variety Pack Chicken and Gravy & Turkey and
20	Gravy Sitter 2 nd Foods;
21	
22	• Gerber Banana Pouch Sitter 2 nd Foods;
23	Gerber Pasta Marinara Advanced;
24	 Gerber Pear Parsnip Blueberry Sitter 2nd Foods;
25	
26	Gerber Organic Apple Purple Carrot Blueberry with Yogurt Pouch
27	Toddler 12+ Months;
28	 Gerber Carrot Mango Pineapple Sitter 2nd Foods;
	Soloti Californiango i mitappio Situoi 2 1 00 as,

1	Gerber Pasta Primavera Advanced;
2	 Gerber Strong Banana Blueberry Purple Carrot Greek Yogurt Mixed
3 4	Grains Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
5	
6	Gerber Garden Veggies & Rice Advanced;
7	 Gerber Squash Apple Corn Sitter 2nd Foods;
8	Gerber Banana Blueberry Rice Pudding Advanced;
9	Gerber Strong Pear Sweet Potato Greek Yogurt Oats Cinnamon Pouch
10 11	Toddler 12+ Months;
12	• Gerber Pumpkin Banana Sitter 2 nd Foods;
13 14	• Gerber Strong Broccoli Carrot Banana Pineapple Pouch Toddler 12+
15	Months;
16	• Gerber My 1 st Veggies Starter Kit Supported Sitter 1 st Foods;
17 18	 Gerber Organic Sweet Potato Apple Carrot& Cinnamon Sitter 2nd Foods
19	 Gerber Organic Banana Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
20	 Gerber Mango Apple Twist Sitter 2nd Foods;
21	
22	 Gerber Sweet Potato Mango Pear Kale Pouch Toddler 12+ Months;
23	 Gerber Organic Apple Kale Fig Sitter 2nd Foods;
24	 Gerber Organic Carrot Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
25	Garbar My 1st Empite Starter Vit Supported Sitter 1st Foods
26	• Gerber My 1 st Fruits Starter Kit Supported Sitter 1 st Foods;
27	 Gerber Organic Apple Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
28	

1	Gerber Organic Apple Mango Brown Rice with Vanilla Pouch Toddler
2	12+ Months;
3	 Gerber Fruit & Veggie Favorites Baby Food Variety Pack Tubs Sitter 2nd
5	
6	Foods;
7	• Gerber Apple Chicken Dinner Sitter 2 nd Foods;
8	 Gerber Organic Apple Peach Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
9	 Gerber Organic Apple Spinach with Kale Sitter 2nd Foods;
10 11	• Gerber Apple Mango with Rice Cereal Sitter 2 nd Foods;
12	 Gerber Organic Apple Raspberry Acai Berry Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
13 14	• Gerber Apple Strawberry Blueberry Mixed Cereal Sitter 2 nd Foods;
15	 Gerber Organic Banana Blueberry Blackberry Oatmeal Pouch Sitter 2^{nc}
16	Foods;
17 18	 Gerber Chicken Noodle Dinner Sitter 2nd Foods;
19	 Gerber Organic Mango Apple Banana Sitter 2nd Foods;
20	Gerber Organic Banana Apple Strawberry with Millet Quinoa &
21 22	Cinnamon Sitter 2 nd Foods;
23	
24	 Gerber Organic Banana Mango Sitter 2nd Foods;
25	• Gerber Chicken Rice Dinner Sitter 2 nd Foods;
26	 Gerber Organic Banana Squash Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
27	 Gerber Hawaiian Delight Sitter 2nd Foods;
28	
	 Gerber Organic Pear Purple Carrot Raspberry Sitter 2nd Foods;

1	 Gerber Organic Apple Wild Blueberry Sitter 2nd Foods;
2 3	Gerber Organic Banana Strawberry Raspberry Mixed Grain Toddler 12⊣
4	Months;
5	 Gerber Mac & Cheese with Vegetables Dinner Sitter 2nd Foods;
6	 Gerber Organic Apple Strawberry Beet Sitter 2nd Foods;
7	
8	 Gerber Organic Mango Apple Carrot Kale Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
9 10	 Gerber Pea Carrot Spinach Sitter 2nd Foods;
11	 Gerber Organic Pear Blueberry Apple Avocado Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
12	 Gerber Turkey Rice Dinner Sitter 2nd Foods;
13	 Gerber Organic Carrot Banana Mango with Millet & Quinoa Sitter 2nd
14 15	Foods;
16	 Gerber Organic Pear Spinach Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
17	 Gerber Vanilla Custard Pudding with Banana Sitter 2nd Foods;
18 19	 Gerber Organic Carrot Apple Pear Sitter 2nd Foods;
20	
21	 Gerber Organic Pear Zucchini Mango Sitter 2nd Foods;
22	 Gerber Vegetable Beef Dinner Sitter 2nd Foods;
23	 Gerber Organic Pear Supported Sitter 1st Foods;
24	 Gerber Organic Pumpkin Banana Carrot Pouch Sitter 2nd Foods;
2526	 Gerber Vegetable Chicken Sitter 2nd Foods;
20 27	
28	Gerber Lil' Mixers Vegetable Chicken + Mixed Grain & Carro
	Beginner;

- Gerber Lil' Mixers Sweet Potato Turkey + Mixed Grain & Carrot Beginner;
- Gerber Lil' Mixers Apple Avocado + Quinoa Crisp Intermediate;
- Gerber Lil' Mixers Carrot Sweet Potato Pea + Quinoa Crisp Intermediate;
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Squash Chickpeas & Spinach with Avocado oil + sage Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Broccoli & Carrots with Olive Oil + Garlic Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Sweet Potatos with Olive Oil + Rosemary Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Purple Carrots & Cauliflower with Avocado Oil + Oregano Pouch;
- Organics HappyTOT Organic Oatmeal & Sprouted Quinoa with Bananas & Strawberries;
- Organics HappyTOT Organic Oatmeal & Sprouted Quinoa with Apples
 & Blueberries;
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Pears, Mangos & Spinach Pouch;
- Organics HappyTOT Fiber & Protein Gluten Free Oat Bar Organic
 Apples & Spinach;
- Organics HappyBABY Apples & Spinach;

• Organics HappyTOT Super Foods Organic Pears, Mangos & Spinach
Pouch;
• Organics HappyTOT Super Foods Organic Apples & Butternut Squash
Pouch;
• Organics HappyTOT Super Foods Gluten Free Oat Bar Organic
Bananas, Strawberries & Sunflower Butter;
Organics HappyTOT Super Foods Organic Bananas, Peaches & Mangos
Pouch;
• Organics HappyTOT Fiber & Protein Gluten Free Oat Bar Organic
Bananas & Carrots Pouch;
• Organics HappyKID Organic Mango & Sweet Potato;
• Organics HappyTOT Fiber & Protein Organic Pears, Kiwi & Kale;
• Organics HappyKID Organic Raspberry & Butternut Squash;
• Organics HappyTOT Fiber & Protein Organic Pears, Peaches, Pumpkin
& Apples Pouch;
• Organics HappyTOT Super Foods Organic Apples, Mangos & Kale
Pouch;
• Organics HappyBABY Organic Teether Crackers Mango & Pumpkin;
• Organics HappyTOT Super Foods Organic Pears; Beets & Blueberries
Pouch;
• Organics HappyKID Organic Apple & Cinnamon;

- Organics HappyTOT Super Smart Organic Bananas, Mangos & Spinach
- Organics HappyBABY Sweet Potatoes, Mangos & Carrots Pouch;
- Organics HappyTOT Super Morning Dairy Free Organic Bananas, Dragon Fruit, Coconut Milk & Oats Pouch;
- Organics HappyKID Organic Apple, Kale & Blueberry Pouch;
- Organics HappyTOT Super Smart Organic Bananas, Beets &
- Organics HappyTOT Super Morning Dairy Free Organic Apples, Acai,
- Organics HappyBABY Carrots, Strawberries & Chickpeas Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Nutty Blends Organic Apples with 1tsp Walnut
- Organics HappyBABY Purple Carrots, Bananas, Avocados & Quinoa
- Organics HappyBABY Nutty Blends Organic Bananas with 1tsp
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Harvest Vegetables & Chicken with
- Organics HappyBABY Superfood Puffs Apple & Broccoli;

- Organics HappyBABY Organic Yogis Mixed Berry Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Pears, Pumpkin, Peaches & Granola Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Yogis Banana & Mango Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Bananas, Pineapple, Avocado & Granola Pouch;
- Organics HappyBABY Organic Greek Yogis Strawberry Banana;
- Organics HappyBABY Apples & Blueberries.
- 2. Caregivers like Plaintiff trust manufacturers like Defendants to sell food for babies/children that is nutritious, safe, and free from harmful toxins, contaminants, and chemicals. Caregivers certainly expect that the food that they feed their infants and toddlers will be free from heavy metals, harmful toxins, and contaminants.
- 3. Plaintiff and those similarly situated ("Class Members") relied on Defendants' misrepresentations when purchasing the Products. Plaintiff and Class Members paid a premium for the Products based upon their representations. Given that Plaintiff and Class Members paid a premium for the Products based on Defendants' misrepresentations, Plaintiff and Class Members suffered an injury in the amount of the premium paid.
- 4. Plaintiff and Class Members did not know that, contrary to the representations on the Products' labels, the Products contained heavy metals (including arsenic, cadmium, and lead) at levels that are above what is considered safe for babies. As a result, the Products' labeling is deceptive and misleading.

5. Defendants' conduct violated and continues to violate laws including, but not limited to: Negligent Misrepresentation, California's Consumer Legal Remedies Act, California False Advertising Law, Unfair Competition Law, Breach of Express Warranty, Breach of Implied Warranty, and Unjust Enrichment. Defendants breached and continue to breach their warranties regarding the Products. Defendants have been and continue to be unjustly enriched. Accordingly, Plaintiff brings this action against Defendants on behalf of himself and Class Members who purchased the Products during the applicable statute of limitations period (the "Class Period").

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

- 6. Consumers lack the scientific knowledge necessary to determine whether the Defendants' products contain heavy metals or to know or ascertain the true nature of the ingredients and quality of the Products. Reasonable consumers therefore must and do rely on Defendants to honestly report what their products contain.
- 7. Defendants did not list heavy metals as an ingredient on their Products' labels, nor do they warn of the potential presence of heavy metals in their Products.
- 8. A recent report by the U.S. House of Representatives' Subcommittee on Economic and Consumer Policy, Committee on Oversight and Reform reveals that caregivers' trust has been violated. The Subcommittee's

investigation of the seven largest baby food manufacturers in the United States, including Defendants, was spurred by "reports alleging high levels of toxic heavy metals in baby foods" and the knowledge that "[e]ven low levels of exposure can cause serious and often irreversible damage to brain development."

- 9. The Subcommittee's report revealed that "[i]nternal company standards permit dangerously high levels of toxic heavy metals, and ... that the manufacturers have often sold foods that exceeded these levels."
- 10. The investigation found that, when baby food manufacturers were left to self-regulate and establish their own heavy metals standards, they routinely failed to abide by their own standards.
- 11. The Subcommittee also revealed that baby foods are "tainted with significant levels of toxic heavy metals, including arsenic, lead, cadmium, and mercury."
 - 12. Specific to Gerber, the Subcommittee found the following:
 - a. Gerber used 67 batches of rice flour that tested over 90 ppb
 inorganic arsenic high arsenic ingredients;
 - b. Gerber used an ingredient, conventional sweet potatoes, with 48 ppb lead. Gerber also used twelve other batches of sweet potato that tested over 20 ppb for lead, the EU's lenient upper standard.
 - c. Gerber used multiple batches of carrots containing as much as 87 ppb cadmium, and 75% of the carrots Gerber used had more than

5 ppb	cadmium -	the EPA	's	drinking	water	stand	ard
- 11				0			

- d. Since Gerber's policy is to only test its ingredients and not its final products the Subcommittee states that, that policy "recklessly endangers babies and children and prevents the companies from ever knowing the full extent of the danger presented by their products."
 - Only testing ingredients gives the mistaken appearance of lowerthan-actual toxic heavy metal levels.
- 13. Specific to Nurture, the Subcommittee found the following:
 - a. Nurture (HappyBABY) sold baby foods after tests showed they contained as much as 180 parts per billion (ppb) inorganic arsenic. Over 25% of the products Nurture tested before sale contained over 100 ppb inorganic arsenic. Nurture's testing shows that the typical baby food product it sold contained 60 ppb inorganic arsenic;
 - b. Nurture (HappyBABY) sold finished baby food products that tested as high as 641 ppb lead. Almost 20% of the finished baby food products that Nurture tested contained over 10 ppb lead;
 - c. Sixty-five percent of Nurture (HappyBABY) finished baby food

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products contained more than 5 ppb cadmium;

- Nurture (HappyBABY) sold finished baby food products d. containing as much as 10 ppb mercury; and
- Nurture (HappyBABY) sold all products tested, regardless of e. how much toxic heavy metal the baby food contained. By company policy, Nurture's toxic heavy metal testing is not intended for consumer safety. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has only finalized one standard—100 ppb inorganic arsenic in infant rice cereal—and Nurture set its internal standard for that product 15% higher than the FDA limit, at 115 ppb.
- In its conclusion, the Subcommittee stressed the danger associated with the presence of heavy metals in baby food: "These toxic heavy metals pose serious health risks to babies and toddlers. Manufacturers knowingly sell these products to unsuspecting caregivers, in spite of internal company standards and test results, and without any warning labeling whatsoever."
- 15. Many of Defendants' Products contain labels using words such as organic, HappyTot, and/or HappyBaby to imply to consumers that the products are healthy, Consumers would not pay a premium if they knew that these Products contained any levels of toxic heavy metals.

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- 17. Defendants' deceptive representations and omissions are material in that a reasonable person would attach importance to such information and would be induced to act upon such information in making purchase decisions.
- 18. Defendants also know that consumers, such as Plaintiff and the Class, are unwilling to purchase baby food that contains elevated levels of toxic heavy metals.
- Defendants each knew that if the elevated levels of toxic heavy metals in 19. their respective brands of baby food was disclosed to Plaintiff and Class members, then Plaintiff and Class members would be unwilling to purchase the Products.
- 20. Plaintiff and the Class members reasonably relied to their detriment on Defendants' misleading representations and omissions.
- Defendants' false, misleading, and deceptive misrepresentations and 21. omissions are likely to continue to deceive and mislead reasonable consumers and the general public, as they have already deceived and misled Plaintiff and the Class members.
- As an immediate, direct, and proximate result of Defendants' false, 22. misleading, and deceptive representations and omissions, Defendants injured Plaintiff and the Class members in that they:
 - Paid a sum of money for Products that were not what a. Defendants represented;

- **b.** Paid a premium price for Products that were not what Defendants represented;
- c. Were deprived of the benefit of the bargain because the Products they purchased were different from what Defendants warranted;
- **d.** Were deprived of the benefit of the bargain because the Products they purchased had less value than what Defendants represented;
- e. Ingested a substance that was of a different quality than what Defendants promised; and
- **f.** Were denied the benefit of the beneficial properties of the foods Defendants promised.
- 23. Had Defendants not made the false, misleading, and deceptive representations and omissions, Plaintiff and the Class members would not have been willing to pay the same amount for the Products they purchased.
- 24. Plaintiff and the Class members all paid money for the Products; however, Plaintiff and the Class members did not obtain the full value of the advertised Products due to Defendants' misrepresentations and omissions. Plaintiff and the Class members purchased, purchased more of and/or paid more for the Products than they would have had they known the truth about the Products. Consequently, Plaintiff and the Class members
- have suffered injury in fact and lost money as a result of Defendants' wrongful conduct.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 25. This Court has original jurisdiction over all causes of action asserted herein under the Class Fairness Act, 28 U.S.C. §1332(d)(2), because the matter in controversy exceeds the sum or value or \$5,000,000 exclusive of interest and costs and more than two-thirds of the Class resides in states other than the state in which Defendants are citizens and in which this case is filed, and therefore any exemptions to jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. §1332(d)(2) do not apply.
- 26. Venue is proper in this Court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1339, because Plaintiff suffered injury as a result of the Defendants' acts in this district, many of the acts and transactions giving rise to this action occurred in this district, and Defendants conduct substantial business in this district. Defendants have intentionally availed themselves of the laws and markets of this district, and Defendants are subject to personal jurisdiction in this district.

PARTIES

<u>Plaintiff</u>

27. Plaintiff is an individual consumer who, at all times material hereto, was a citizen of the State of California. Plaintiff purchased the Products during the Class Period. The packaging of the Products Plaintiff purchased did not contain the representation that the Products contained harmful contaminants and heavy metals. If

the Products actually were free of harmful contaminants and heavy metals, Plaintiff would purchase the Products in the immediate future.

28. Had Defendants not made the false, misleading, and deceptive representations and omissions regarding the Products, Plaintiff would not have been willing to pay the same amount for the Products, and, consequently, would not have been willing to purchase the Products. Plaintiff purchased, purchased more of and/or paid more for the Products than he would have had he known the truth about the Products. The Products Plaintiff received were worth less than the Products for which he paid. Plaintiff was injured in fact and lost money as a result of Defendants' improper conduct.

Defendants

- 27. Defendant Gerber Products Company (d/b/a Nestle Nutrition, Nestle Infant Nutrition, or Nestle Nutrition North America) is a Michigan corporation with its principal place of business in Virginia. Defendant manufactures, markets, advertises, and distributes the Products throughout the United States. Defendant created and/or authorized the false, misleading, and deceptive advertisements, packaging, and labeling for the Products.
- 28. Defendant Nurture, Inc. (d/b/a Happy Family Brands and Happy Family Organics) is a Delaware corporation with its principal place of business in White Plains, New York. Defendant manufactures, markets, advertises, and distributes the Products

throughout the United States. Defendant created and/or authorized the false, misleading, and deceptive advertisements, packaging, and labeling for the Products.

CLASS ACTION ALLEGATIONS

29. Plaintiff brings this action individually and on behalf of the following Class pursuant to Rules 23(a) and 23(b)(2) and (3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure:

All persons within the United States who purchased the Products from the beginning of any applicable limitations period (the "Class").

- 30. Excluded from the Class are the Defendants, any parent companies, subsidiaries, and/or affiliates, officers, directors, legal representatives, employees, coconspirators, all governmental entities, and any judge, justice, or judicial officer presiding over this matter.
- 31. This action is brought and may be properly maintained as a class action. There is a well-defined community of interests in this litigation and the members of the Class are easily ascertainable.
- 32. The members in the proposed Class are so numerous that individual joinder of all members is impracticable, and the disposition of the claims of the members of all Classes members in a single action will provide substantial benefits to the parties and Court.
- 33. Questions of law and fact common to Plaintiff and the Class include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (j) whether a representation that a product is healthy, nutritious, made from the best ingredients, and safe for consumption and does not contain heavy metals is material to a reasonable consumer;
- (k) whether Defendants' Marketing of the Products are likely to mislead, deceive, confuse, or confound consumers acting reasonably;
- (l) whether Defendants violated California Business & Professions Code sections 17200, et seq.;
- (m) whether Defendants violated California Business & Professions Code sections 17500, et seq.;
- (n) whether Defendants violated California Civil Code sections 1750, *et seq.*; and
- (o) whether Plaintiff and the members of the Class are entitled to declaratory and injunctive relief?
- 34. Defendants engaged in a common course of conduct giving rise to the legal rights sought to be enforced by Plaintiff individually and on behalf of the other members of the Class. Identical statutory violations and business practices and harms are involved. Individual questions, if any, are not prevalent in comparison to the numerous common questions that dominate this action.

- 35. Plaintiff's claims are typical of those of the members of the Class in that they are based on the same underlying facts, events, and circumstances relating to Defendants' conduct.
- 36. Plaintiff will fairly and adequately represent and protect the interests of the Class, has no interests incompatible with the interests of the Class, and has retained counsel competent and experienced in class action, consumer protection, and false advertising litigation.
- 37. Class treatment is superior to other options for resolution of the controversy because the relief sought for each member of the Class is small enough that, absent representative litigation, it would be infeasible for members of the Class to redress the wrongs done to them.
- 38. Questions of law and fact common to the Class predominate over any questions affecting only individual members of the Class.
 - 39. As a result of the foregoing, class treatment is appropriate.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION NEGLIGENT MISREPRESENTATION AGAINST DEFENDANTS ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS

- 40. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.
- 41. Plaintiff reasonably relied on Defendants' representations that the Products were as marketed to him and the Class and were safe for consumption, which would include being free from heavy metals.

- 42. Defendants owed a duty to use reasonable care to provide accurate disclosures concerning the presence of heavy metals in the Products, as well as to avoid misleading consumers by omitting the presence of heavy metals.
- 43. Defendants breached their duty to Plaintiff and the Class by providing false, misleading, and/or deceptive information about the nature of the Products.
- 44. Plaintiff and the Class reasonably and justifiably relied upon the information that Defendants represented to them. Reasonable consumers would have relied on Defendants' own representations regarding the ingredients of the Products.
- 45. As a result of these misrepresentations, Plaintiff and the Class paid a premium to purchase the Products.
- 46. Defendants failed to use reasonable care in their representations to Plaintiff and the Class, especially when it comes to the ingredients contained in the Products.
- 47. Defendants' negligent misrepresentations have damaged Plaintiff and the Class in an amount to be proven at trial or alternatively, seek rescission and disgorgement under this Count.

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SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION VIOLATION OF CALIFORNIA'S CONSUMER LEGAL REMEDIES ACT, CALIFORNIA CIVIL CODE §§1750, Et. Seq., AGAINST DEFENDANTS ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS

- 48. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.
- 49. Plaintiff and each proposed Class member is a "consumer," as that term is defined in California Civil Code section 1761(d).
- 50. The Products are "goods," as that term is defined in California Civil Code section 1761(a).
- 51. Defendants are "persons" as that term is defined in California Civil Code section 1761(c).
- 52. Plaintiff and each proposed Class member's purchase of Defendants' products constituted a "transaction" as that term is defined in California Civil Code section 1761(e).
- 53. Defendants' conduct alleged herein violates the following provisions of California's Consumer Legal Remedies Act (the "CLRA"):
 - (a) California Civil Code section 1770(a)(5), by negligently, recklessly, and/or intentionally representing that the Products are healthy and safe for consumption, and by failing to make any mention of heavy metals in the Products;

- (b) California Civil Code section 1770(a)(7), by negligently, recklessly, and/or intentionally representing that the Products were of a particular standard, quality, or grade, when they were of another;
- (c) California Civil Code section 1770(a)(9), by negligently, recklessly, and/or intentionally advertising the Products with intent not to sell them as advertised; and
- (d) California Civil Code section 1770(a)(16), by representing that the Products have been supplied in accordance with previous representations when they have not.
- 54. As a direct and proximate result of these violations, Plaintiff and the Class have been harmed, and that harm will continue unless Defendants are enjoined from using the misleading marketing described herein in any manner in connection with the advertising and sale of the Products.
- 55. Plaintiff seeks an award of attorneys' fees pursuant to, *inter alia*, California Civil Code section 1780(e) and California Code of Civil Procedure section 1021.5.

THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION VIOLATIONS OF CALIFORNIA FALSE ADVERTISING LAW, CALIFORNIA BUSINESS & PROFESSIONS CODE §§17500, Et Seq., AGAINST DEFENDANTS ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS

56. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.

- 57. California's False Advertising Law prohibits any statement in connection with the sale of goods "which is untrue or misleading." Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §17500.
- 58. As set forth herein, Defendants' claims that the Products are healthy and safe for consumption are false and likely to deceive the public.
- 59. Defendants' claims that the Products are healthy and safe for consumption are untrue due to the presence of heavy metals in the Products.
- 60. Defendants knew, or reasonably should have known, that all these claims were untrue or misleading.
- 61. Defendants' conduct is ongoing and continuing, such that prospective injunctive relief is necessary. Plaintiff would purchase the Products in the future if the Products are healthy, safe for consumption, and do not contain heavy metals.
- 62. Plaintiff and members of the Class are entitled to injunctive and equitable relief, and restitution in the amount the purchase price of the Products.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION VIOLATIONS OF THE UNFAIR COMPETITION LAW, CALIFORNIA BUSINESS & PROFESSIONS CODE §§17200, Et Seq., AGAINST DEFENDANTS ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS

- 63. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.
- 64. The Unfair Competition Law prohibits any "unlawful, unfair, or fraudulent business act or practice." Cal. Bus. & Prof. Code §17200.

- 65. Defendants' statements that the Products are healthy and safe for consumption are deceptive to the public, as is Defendants' omitting to divulge the existence of heavy metals in the Products.
- 66. <u>Unlawful:</u> Defendants have advertised the Products using false and/or misleading claims, such that Defendants' actions as alleged herein violate at least the following laws:
- The CLRA, California Business & Professions Code sections 1750, et seq.; and
- The False Advertising Law, California Business & Professions Code sections 17500, *et seq*.
- 67. **Fraudulent:** Defendants' statements that the Products are healthy and safe for consumption are deceptive to the public, as is Defendants' omitting to divulge the existence of heavy metals in the Products.
- 68. <u>Unfair:</u> Defendants' conduct with respect to the labeling, packaging, advertising, marketing, and sale of the Products is unfair because Defendants' conduct was immoral, unethical, unscrupulous, or substantially injurious to consumers and the utility of its conduct, if any, does not outweigh the gravity of the harm to its victims.
- 69. Defendants' conduct with respect to the labeling, packaging, advertising, marketing, and sale of the Products is also unfair because it violates

public policy as declared by specific constitutional, statutory, or regulatory provisions, including, but not limited to, the False Advertising Law and the CLRA.

- 70. Defendants' conduct with respect to the labeling, packaging, advertising, marketing, and sale of the Products is also unfair because the consumer injury is substantial, not outweighed by benefits to consumers or competition, and not one that consumers, can reasonably avoid.
- 71. In accordance with California Business & Professions Code section 17203, Plaintiff seeks an order enjoining Defendants from continuing to conduct business through fraudulent or unlawful acts and practices and to commence a corrective advertising campaign. Defendants' conduct is ongoing and continuing, such that prospective injunctive relief is necessary.
- 72. On behalf of himself and the Class, Plaintiff also seeks an order for the restitution of all monies from the sales of the Products, which were unjustly acquired through acts of fraudulent, unfair, or unlawful competition.

FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION BREACH OF EXPRESS WARRANTY, CALIFORNIA COMMERICAL CODE §§2313, AGAINST DEFENDANTS ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS

- 73. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.
- 74. As set forth herein, Defendants made express representations to Plaintiff and the Class that the Products were healthy and safe for consumption.

- 75. These promises became part of the basis of the bargain between the parties and thus constituted express warranties.
- 76. There was a sale of goods from Defendants to Plaintiff and the Class members.
- 77. On the basis of the express warranty, Defendants sold to Plaintiff and the Class members the Products.
- 78. Defendants knowingly breached the express warranty by including heavy metals in the Products.
- 79. Defendants were on notice of this breach as it was aware of the included heavy metals in the Products.
- 80. Privity exists because Defendants expressly warranted to Plaintiff and the Class that the Products were healthy and safe for consumption.
- 81. Plaintiff and the Class members reasonably relied on the express warranty by Defendants.
- 82. As a result of Defendants' breaches of its express warranty, Plaintiff and the Class suffered damages as they paid money for the Products that were not as Defendants represented.
- 83. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and the Class, seek actual damages for Defendants' breach of warranty.

SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION BREACH OF IMPLIED WARRANTY, CALIFORNIA COMMERICAL CODE §2314, AGAINST DEFENDANTS ON BEHALF OF THE CLASS

- 84. Plaintiff repeats and realleges each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.
- 85. Defendants are merchants engaging in the sale of goods to Plaintiff and the Class members.
- 86. There was a sale of goods from Defendants to Plaintiff and the Class members.
- 87. As set forth herein, Defendants marketed the Products to Plaintiff and the Class as healthy and safe for consumption. Defendants did not include heavy metals on their ingredient lists, nor did they provide adequate warning that the Products contain heavy metals.
- 88. The Products did not conform to Defendants' representations as they contained heavy metals at undisclosed and alarming levels.
- 89. These promises became part of the basis of the bargain between the parties and thus constituted implied warranty.
- 90. Defendants breached the implied warranty by selling the Products that failed to conform to the representations, including the ingredient labels, as each product contained heavy metals.
- 91. Defendants were on notice of this breach as it was aware of the inclusion of heavy metals in the Products, and based on the public investigation by

the nonprofit organization, Healthy Babies Bright Futures¹, that showed its baby food products as containing heavy metals.

- 92. Privity exists because Defendants impliedly warranted to Plaintiff and the Class members through the warranting, packaging, advertising, marketing, and labeling that the Products were healthy and safe for consumption and by failing to warn about the existence of heavy metals.
- 93. As a result of Defendants' breach of its implied warranty of merchantability, Plaintiff and the Class sustained damages as they paid money for the Products that were not what Defendants represented.
- 94. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and the Class, seek actual damages for Defendants' breach of warranty.

SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION UNJUST ENRICHMENT AGAINST DEFENDANTS ON BEHALF OF CLASSES

- 95. Plaintiff repeats and reallege each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.
- 96. Substantial benefits have been conferred on Defendants by Plaintiff and the Class through the purchase of the Products. Defendants knowingly and willingly accepted and enjoyed these benefits.

¹ https://www.healthybabyfood.org/sites/healthybabyfoods.org/files/2020-04/BabyFoodReport ENGLISH R6.pdf

- 97. Defendants either knew, or should have known, that the payments rendered by Plaintiff were given and received with the expectation that the Products would have the ingredients and suitability for consumption represented and warranted by Defendants. As such, it would be inequitable for Defendants to retain the benefit of the payments under these circumstances.
- 98. Defendants' acceptance and retention of these benefits under the circumstances alleged herein make it inequitable for Defendants to retain the benefits without payment of the value to Plaintiff and the Classes.
- 99. Plaintiff and the Classes are entitled to recover from Defendants all amounts wrongfully collected and improperly retained by Defendants, plus interest thereon.
- 100. Plaintiff and the Classes seek actual damages, injunctive and declaratory relief, attorneys' fees, costs, and any other just and proper relief available under the laws.

JURY DEMAND

Plaintiff demands a trial by jury on all issues.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and the Class, prays for judgment as follows:

A. An order declaring this action to be a proper class action, appointing Plaintiff and his counsel to represent the Class, and requiring Defendants to bear the costs of class notice;

- B. An order enjoining Defendants from selling the Products until the higher and/or unsafe levels of heavy metals are removed;
- C. An order enjoining Defendants from selling the Products in any manner suggesting or implying that they are healthy, nutritious, and safe for consumption;
- D. An order requiring Defendants to engage in a corrective advertising campaign and engage in any further necessary affirmative injunctive relief, such as recalling existing products;
- E. An order awarding declaratory relief, and any further retrospective or prospective injunctive relief permitted by law or equity, including enjoining Defendants from continuing the unlawful practices alleged herein, and injunctive relief to remedy Defendants' past conduct;
- F. An order requiring Defendants to pay restitution to restore all funds acquired by means of any act or practice declared by this Court to be an unlawful, unfair, or fraudulent business act or practice, untrue or misleading advertising, or a violation of the Unfair Competition Law, False Advertising Law, or CLRA, plus pre- and post-judgment interest thereon;

1	G. An order requiring Defendants to disgorge or return all monies,
2	revenues, and profits obtained by means of any wrongful or unlawful act or practice
3	
4	H. An order requiring Defendants to pay all actual and statutory
5	damages permitted under the counts alleged herein;
6 7	I. An order requiring Defendants to pay punitive damages on any count
8	so allowable;
9	
10	J. An order awarding attorneys' fees and costs to Plaintiff, the Class;
11	and
12	K. An order providing for all other such equitable relief as may be just
13	and proper.
14	and propert
15	Date: February 17, 2021
16	SHOOP A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION
17 18	/s/_ Thomas S. Alch David R. Shoop, Esq.
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